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SOURCE

1. On 18 May 1949, two days after the election, the assistant director of HV Materialversorgung of the DWK, Alfred Binz, received the chief of the economics section of the ZS, Willy Stoph, and his assistant Wolf, for a business conference. Before the beginning of the discussion, they discussed in detail the result of the Volkskongress elections. The gentlemen of the ZS expressed their opinions in approximately this fashion.
 - a. "The result of the election is a complete surprise for the SED and forces its members to undertake a self-critical examination of their efforts heretofore. The repercussions abroad and the reaction of Soviet Military Government cannot yet be foreseen. The position of the USSR in Paris has become considerably worse.
 - b. "No instructions were issued by the ZS or Land organizations on counting ballots. However, many Kreis committees and local group leaders gave in-

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There are no accurate indications how many doubtful votes were counted YES. One can estimate that about 55% of the valid votes were really meant to be affirmative although not all of these were based on conviction.

- c. "There is particular surprise over the number of negative votes cast in areas where new farmers were settled. In rural areas more than half of all the young people voted NO, while in the cities other than Berlin, about 60% of them voted YES, thereby assuring a good total among young people. In industrial areas, the large number of affirmative votes (70-75%) shows that the workers are already well-trained and won over.

"The high rate of participation in the election shows that SED-sponsored organization of the election was good. The 'Bourgeois' parties, however,

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did not do any honest work. The willingness to play ball which they outwardly showed was undone by a whispering campaign. The Rias propaganda also had a strong effect. For this reason, the number of negative ~~notes~~ in out-of-the-way areas was considerably smaller. The lifting of the blockade was taken as a sign of Russian weakness by the voters and this in turn had its effect in worsening the results of the election."

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